

Whistleblower For Aged Care Policy



Purpose

This policy provides a safe and confidential way for customers, their families, carers, representatives and aged care workers to raise concerns about suspected misconduct, unsafe practices, or breaches of rights within our aged care service that may indicate a contravention of the Aged Care Act 2024.

We are committed to listening, protecting those who speak up, ensuring issues are investigated fairly, and meeting all our obligations as a registered provider of funded aged care services in accordance with the Aged Care Act 2024.

Who Can Raise Concerns

This policy is for:

- Customers of our funded aged care services
- Family members, carers, supporters and representatives of people who use our funded aged care services
- aged care workers

What Can Be Reported

You can use this policy to report serious concerns such as:

- Abuse, neglect, or unsafe care
- Breaches of customer rights
- Fraud, theft, or misuse of funds
- Serious breaches of the *Aged Care Act 2024* or Aged Care Rules 2025
- Cover-ups of any of the above

Everyday service feedback or complaints should still be made through our Feedback and Complaints Process, unless you feel unsafe doing so.

Protection for Whistleblowers

Part 5 of Section 7 of the *Aged Care Act 2024* provides protection for people who raise concerns about funded aged care services.

Concerns raised are protected under the Aged Care Act 2024 if you have reasonable grounds to suspect that Meals on Wheels SA may have contravened a provision of the Act.

If you raise a concern with reasonable grounds:

- You will be **protected from retaliation**, victimisation, or negative treatment
- Your identity will be kept **confidential** (unless you agree otherwise or the law requires disclosure)
- You can choose to remain **anonymous**
- Your concern will be taken seriously and investigated appropriately

How to Raise a Concern

You can raise a concern by talking or writing to any of these people at Meals on Wheels SA:

- One of our aged care workers
- The Program Support Manager
- A General Manager or other designated Responsible Person

Our Free call telephone number is **1800 854 453**

Our postal address is **PO Box 406, Unley SA 5061**

Our email is **info@mealsonwheelssa.org.au**

If you prefer, you can also report directly to:

- an independent aged care advocate
- The **Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission** (1800 951 822)
- An official of the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Aged Care
- A Police Officer

How We Respond

When a concern is raised:

1. We will acknowledge your report (unless you remain anonymous).
2. We will assess the issue to decide next steps.
3. An impartial investigation will be carried out if required.
4. Outcomes will be shared with you (where appropriate).

Support Available

If you believe we have caused detriment (or have failed to protect you in accordance with the Act), Whistleblowers can access:

- A support person of your choice
- External advocacy services, such as the **Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN)** 1800 700 600

Policy Responsibilities

Responsible for monitoring	General Managers
Responsible for implementation	SLT

Policy Delegations

Review of policy and policy compliance	GMBS
Approving policy and policy changes	CEO

Documents